

INSTRUCTIONS ON MANAGING PROTRACTS APPLICATIONS AND AGREEMENTS (AKA, CONTRACTS)

I. Prior to Obligation of NRCS Financial Assistance Program Contracts

- A. The System for Award Management (SAM.gov) status will be verified as a component of eligibility for the financial assistance program for which an application for financial assistance is made by clients requiring a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number (those with an EIN tax id).
1. District Conservationists (DCs), or delegated Field Office (FO) Staff, will verify current Central Contractor Registration (CCR) status in SAM.gov prior to setting application to “Eligible”.
 - a) If CCR **is** current, but verification has not been previously printed/uploaded into the DMS or the expiration date has changed from previously uploaded verification, the SAM.gov status report will be printed and uploaded with other obligation documentation into the DMS.
 - b) If CCR **is not** current, the “Other Eligibility” indicator in the ProTracts Participant Information screen will be set to “NO”.
 - (1) Ineligible entity clients will be notified in writing of the ineligibility status and provided an opportunity to become eligible by a specific deadline. The DUNS CCR Fact Sheet will be provided with the written notification. Written notification must be sent Certified Mail (Return Receipt not Required) in order to track delivery.
 2. Applicable entity clients will be considered ineligible for funding if CCR is not current in SAM.gov by the deadline provided in the written notification [See step A, 1, (b), (1)].
 - a) Applications for applicants that do not meet the deadline will be set to “Ineligible” in ProTracts and will not be considered for funding in the current funding round.
 - b) Notification of ineligibility will be mailed, by Certified Mail – Return Receipt, using the letter template provided in CPM 440, Part 512, Subpart J, Section 512.93. (Also available as a letter template in ProTracts).
 3. Assistant State Conservationist/Programs, or delegated Programs staff, will verify CCR status of entity applicants again prior to pre-approving applications.

(ME Instruction 120-384, July 2014)

- B. SAM.gov status will be verified as a component of eligibility for the financial assistance program for which a modification that increases an active agreement obligation for an applicable entity participant or a modification for transfer of an active agreement to a transferee client requiring a DUNS number (those with an EIN tax id) is being requested.
1. The DC or delegated FO staff, will verify current CCR status in SAM.gov prior to submitting an applicable modification for approval. If verification documentation is not available in the DMS, then a search in SAM.gov must be conducted.
 - a) If CCR **is** current, but verification has not been previously printed/uploaded into the DMS or the expiration date has changed from previously uploaded verification, the SAM.gov status report will be printed and uploaded with other obligation documentation into the DMS.
 - b) If CCR **is not** current, the modification must not be submitted for approval.
 - (1) Ineligible entity participants or clients requesting an applicable modification will be notified in writing of the ineligibility status and provided an opportunity to become eligible by a specific deadline date. The DUNS CCR fact sheet will be provided with the written notification.
 - (a) For entity participants requesting an increase to an agreement obligation, the DC will complete a CPA-153 Non-Compliance form as the written documentation.
 - (b) For entity transferees, the DC will send a certified letter (Return Receipt not Required) as the written documentation.
 2. Applicable entity clients will be considered ineligible for financial assistance if CCR is not current in SAM.gov by the deadline provided in the written notification [See step B, 1, (b), (1)].
 - a) Ineligible entity participants for which a modification was requested that do not meet the deadline will not be eligible to continue the contract and termination proceedings will commence.
 - b) Applicable entity transferees that do not meet the deadline will not be eligible to take on a transfer of agreement obligation and the transfer modification will be cancelled.
 - (1) Notification of ineligibility will be mailed, by Certified Mail Return Receipt, using the letter template provided in CPM 440, Part 512, Subpart J, Section 512.93. (Also available as a letter template in ProTracts).

(ME Instruction 120-384, July 2014)

3. Assistant State Conservationist/Programs, or delegated Programs staff, will verify CCR status of applicable entity participants or transferees again prior to approving modifications.

II. Prior to Payment Approval for Obligated NRCS financial assistance agreements

- A. SAM.gov status will be verified as a component of eligibility for payment of completed contracted items in financial assistance program agreements with clients requiring the DUNS (those with an EIN tax id).

1. The DCs will verify current CCR status prior to practice certification.

- a) If CCR is current, but verification has not been previously printed/uploaded into the DMS or the expiration date has changed from previously uploaded verification, the SAM.gov status report will be printed and uploaded with other obligation documentation into the DMS.

- (1) If expiration date of CCR is imminent at the time of certification, DC will verify that CCR is current at time of payment approval.

- b) If CCR **is not** current, practice will not be certified and client will be notified that payment cannot be made until CCR is renewed.

- (1) The DC will complete a CPA-153 Non-Compliance form as the written documentation.

- (2) Applicable entity participants will be considered ineligible for financial assistance if CCR is not current in SAM.gov by the deadline provided in CPA-153 form and will not be eligible to continue the contract, thus termination proceedings must commence.

- c) A CCR verification will be done again during the second level payment review and status indicated on the 2nd level review checklist.

- (1) If CCR **is not** current, reviewer will not accept the review and will notify the applicable DC of the situation in the review outcome notification.

- (a) The DC will complete a CPA-153 Non-Compliance form as the written documentation.

- (b) Applicable entity participants will be considered ineligible for financial assistance if CCR is not current in SAM.gov by the deadline provided in the CPA-153 form and will not be eligible to continue the contract, thus termination proceedings must commence.

(ME Instruction 120-384, July 2014)

III. SAM.gov Access

A. Access to the SAM.gov website for the purpose of verifying CCR status can be obtained per guidance provided in National Instruction 120-354 (see Attached).

B. FO Staff

1. All DCs are responsible for verification of the CCR status of applicable clients and must obtain access to the SAM.gov website in order to verify CCR.
 - a) The DC may delegate the task of verifying CCR status to FO staff, to include ACES employees and District employees working under a cooperative agreement with NRCS. Delegated FO staff may then obtain access to the SAM.gov website.

C. State Office Staff

1. The Assistant State Conservationist/Programs is responsible for verification of the CCR status of applicable clients and must obtain access to the SAM.gov in order to verify CCR.
 - a) The Assistant State Conservationist/Programs may delegate the task of verifying CCR status to Programs staff. Delegated Programs staff may then obtain access to the SAM.gov website.
2. The State Financial Management (FM) staff and Program Assistants on the Programs staff are responsible for verification of the CCR status of applicable clients at the time of 2nd level payment review, therefore FM staff and Programs/Program Assistants must obtain access to the SAM.gov website.